

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER

AD390472

CLASSIFICATION CHANGES

TO: unclassified

FROM: confidential

LIMITATION CHANGES

TO:

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FROM:

DoD Controlling Organization: Department  
of the Army, Adjutant General's Office,  
Washington, DC 20310.

AUTHORITY

15 Feb 1980 per Group-4 document marking;  
Adjutant General's Office [Army] ltr dtd  
29 Apr 1980

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IN REPLY REFER TO  
ACAM-P (M) (23 May 68) FOR OT RD 681155

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10th Combat Aviation Battalion

3

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 10TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO 96377

AVGN-AE

15 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

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## SECTION I - Significant Organizational Activities

### I. (C) General:

a. Mission: The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion provides aviation support as directed by Commanding Officer, 17th Combat Aviation Group in support of airmobile operations designed to search out and destroy the insurgent enemy and to extend Government of Vietnam (GVN) Control of the population; to provide general support aviation as directed by Commanding Officer 17th Combat Aviation Group: to I Field Forces, Vietnam (IIFORCEV), Deputy Senior Advisor (DSA) II Corps and 5th Special Forces Group; to provide command and control of the assigned and attached units as directed by the Commanding Officer, 17th Combat Aviation Group.

b. Organization: The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was organized as follows on 31 January 1968:

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
130th Medical Detachment Dispensary  
339th Aviation Support Detachment

61st Assault Helicopter Company  
616th Transportation Detachment (CHFM)  
922nd Signal Detachment (Avionics)

92nd Assault Helicopter Company  
617th Transportation Detachment (CHFM)  
732nd Signal Detachment (Avionics)

192nd Assault Helicopter Company  
607th Transportation Detachment (CHFM)  
65th Signal Detachment (Avionics)

281st Assault Helicopter Company  
483rd Transportation Detachment (CHFM)  
499th Signal Detachment (Avionics)

196th Assault Support Helicopter Company  
610th Transportation Detachment (MCHDSM)  
546th Medical Detachment

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1  
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4

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968

243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company  
620th Transportation Detachment (ACHDSH)

342nd Aviation Support Detachment (-)<sup>1</sup>

c. In accordance with paragraph 1, General Orders 14, Headquarters, 17th Combat Aviation Group, dated 6 November 1967, the 196th Assault Support Helicopter Company, 610th Transportation Detachment and 546th Medical Detachment were reassigned from the 208th Combat Aviation Battalion to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion effective 15 November 1967.

d. In accordance with paragraph 1, General Orders 31, Headquarters, 17th CAG, dated 1 December 1967, the 61st Assault Helicopter Company, 610th Transportation Detachment and the 922nd Signal Detachment were assigned to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.

e. In accordance with paragraph 1, General Orders 34, Headquarters, 17th CAG, dated 20 December 1967, the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company, 617th Transportation Detachment, and the 732nd Signal Detachment were assigned to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.

f. In accordance with paragraph 1, General Orders 6075, Headquarters, 1st Aviation Brigade, dated 31 December 1967, the 117th Assault Helicopter Company, 140th Transportation Detachment and 250th Signal Detachment were reassigned from the 17th Combat Aviation Group to the 12th Combat Aviation Group effective 1 January 1968.

g. The 130th Medical Detachment Dispensary was attached to Headquarters, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion in accordance with General Orders 3, dated 9 January 1968, Headquarters, 10th CAB, effective 1 January 1968.

h. The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion assumed control over Lane Army Helipoint, An Son on 15 November 1967 per TWX AVGD-SC 5857-67 dated 13 November 1967. LTC Alfred R. Smith, Deputy Battalion Commander, was assigned Installation Coordinator.

i. The 243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company<sup>2</sup> and the 620th Transportation Detachment were assigned to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion in accordance with General Orders 26, Headquarters, 17th Combat Aviation Group, dated 24 November 1967.

j. In accordance with paragraph 1, General Orders 10, Headquarters, 17th Combat Aviation Group, dated 21 January 1968, the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company, 607th Transportation Detachment and 65th Signal Detachment were reassigned from the 208th Combat Aviation Battalion to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion effective 15 January 1968.

1. This unit, assigned to the 208th CAB, provides control personnel for Lane Army Helipoint, An Son, RVN.

2. The 243rd AS Co was assigned to the 10th CAB VOCO, 17th CAG, on 29 October 1967.

# CONFIDENTIAL

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AVC-1E

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

k. Changes in Battalion Command and primary staff were as follows:

(1) In accordance with paragraph 1, General Orders 1, Headquarters, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion, dated 2 January 1968, LTC Marion F. England assumed command of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion from LTC Eugene F. Crooks.

(2) LTC Edwin M. Clay assumed the duties as Executive Officer, effective 26 November 1967.

(3) LTC Alfred R. Smith assumed the duties as Deputy Battalion Commander effective 5 November 1967.

(4) Major George C. Stroh assumed the duties of Battalion S-2, effective 28 November 1967.

(5) Major John F. Oliver assumed the duties of Battalion S-3, effective 7 November 1967.

(6) Major William J. Poole assumed the duties of Battalion S-4, effective 11 December 1967.

1. Newly assigned companies in the 10th CAB are commanded as follows:

(1) The 243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company is commanded by Major Billy J. Brown.

(2) The 196th Assault Support Helicopter Company is commanded by Major Arthur Hinsdale.

(3) The 61st Assault Helicopter Company is commanded by Major Clarence B. Brooker.

(4) The 92nd Assault Helicopter Company is commanded by Major Kendall L. Stewart.

(5) The 192nd Assault Helicopter Company is commanded by Major Ronald L. Baker.

2. (C) Intelligence:

a. Physical Security: An extensive program has been undertaken to improve the battalion perimeter defense and alert posture. The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion Physical Security and Ground Defense Plan was revised in December. Fighting bunkers are being constructed, communications trenches are being dug and improved perimeter lighting is being installed. Claymores and trip flares have been placed within the defensive wire. Secondary defensive positions around aircraft parking areas, motor pools and billets have been designated and are being prepared. Primary

# CONFIDENTIAL

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AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

and backup communications have been established with each section tied directly to the Battalion TOC for early warning and rapid reaction in the event of an attack. Sirens have been placed in each company area to improve the alert warning system. The Battalion reaction force has been increased from thirty to seventy personnel. Security lighting is being installed around Flanders Heliport to assist guards in protecting the aircraft parking area from "Sapper" attack. Unfortunately, this project had not been completed prior to the 0320 hour attack on 30 January 1968 when "Sappers" destroyed three aircraft and damaged six others with satchel charges. The defense plan has been rehearsed ten times during this reporting period. Republic of Korea Forces in the Dong Ba Thin area continue to provide aggressive patrolling and ambush operations to counter possible large scale ground or mortar attack. Close liaison and cooperation is maintained with the Dong Ba Thin Post Coordinator, the Cam Ranh Bay Defense Coordinator and the 30th ROK Regiment. One light fire team and a flare ship are placed on ramp alert nightly to assist in the area defense when aircraft availability permits. In addition, a daily aircraft surveillance patrol is flown at sunset. Similar steps have been taken in the defensive posture of Lane Army Heliport at An Son, RVN.

b. Counterintelligence: Increased emphasis has been placed on this vital area. The problem has been to make personnel aware of existing regulations. An inspection was made in all assigned companies by the S-2 in an effort to evaluate the counterintelligence activities at that level and to point out deficiencies as well as the corrective action necessary. Steps have been taken to publicize the requirement to burn all office waste, the proper method of marking and handling classified information sent by courier and the danger of discussing military information in unauthorized areas.

### 3. (C) Operations and Training Activities

a. Plans: At the close of this reporting period, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion (CAB) is commanding and coordinating the missions of assigned units from its base camp at Dong Ba Thin, RVN. From 1 December 1967 to 8 January 1968, the 10th Battalion, using the 117th and 92nd Assault Helicopter Companies (AHC) and the 243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company (ASHC) plus an attached AHC from the 214th CAB, supported the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division during Operation Klamath Falls. General support throughout the II Corps Tactical Zone, continued to be the primary mission of assigned aviation units throughout this quarter. The Vagabond ranks increased considerably during this period as new and newly activated units joined the organization. The 243rd ASHC became operational on 19 November 1967; the 92nd AHC on 12 December 1967 and the 61st on 20 December 1967. All quickly assumed General Support II CTZ missions. On 15 November 1967, the 196th ASHC replaced the 180th ASHC which transferred to the 268th CAB with one change in mission. On 15 January 1968, the 192nd AHC joined the Vagabonds and was concurrently dispatched to Phan Thiet, RVN to provide direct support to 3rd Battalion, 506th Infantry, 1st Brigade 101st Airborne Division. The 281st AHC was committed fully to Headquarters 5th Special Forces Group, "PROJECT DELTA" from 1 December 1967 to 16 January 1968.

CONFIDENTIAL

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AVCD-4E

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

b. Operations: The month of November was primarily one of reorganization and preparation. The 243rd ASHC barely got its CH47's settled in Dong Ba Thin when on 19 November 1967, six ships were sent to support the 52nd Combat Aviation Battalion during the height of the battles at Dak To. On 15 November the 196th ASHC was assigned to the battalion and with it came the additional responsibility for Lane Army Heliport located at An Son, RVN where the 196th ASHC is based. On 22 November, the 61st AHC arrived at An Son from CONUS and rapidly prepared for operations! A day later, the 92nd AHC was welcomed at Dong Ba Thin. While the newly arrived companies prepared for operational status, the 10th CAB was preparing also to move to tactical field sites. The 117th AHC moved its total assets to Phan Rang on 27 November to provide direct support to the 3rd Battalion, 506th Infantry, which had recently arrived in country to join the 1st Brigade,

01st Airborne Division. The Battalion Forward moved to Bao Loc, RVN on 30 November as a prelude to Operation Klamath Falls which was launched the following day with a multi-battalion sized combat assault. The 240th AHC, 214th CAB was attached initially to the 10th CAB for this operation. It was replaced, by a sister unit, the 17th AHC, on 17 December. Four infantry battalions and a supporting artillery battalion comprised the supported ground forces. Six CH-47 aircraft from the 243rd ASHC were colocated with the field elements throughout the operation. The 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, conducted search and destroy operations in the area between Bao Loc and Phan Thiet. Operational statistics for the operation are listed below: On 1 January 1968, the 117th AHC was transferred out of the 10th Battalion and moved to Bien Hoa. The 92nd AHC replaced it in the field until the operation terminated on 8 January 1968. With the return to Dong Ba Thin, the Battalion resumed missions in GS II CTZ.

## (1) Operational Statistics for Klamath Falls.<sup>3</sup>

UNIT	TROOPS LIFTED	CARGO (in tons)	SORTIES	HOURS FLOWN
240th AHC	5572	139.0	4159	1783.3
192nd AHC	668	9.8	639	100.2
180th ASFC	77	55.5	48	28.3
117th AHC	6875	290.8	6975	2461.4
17th AHC	6149	244.0	4596	1538.7
92nd AHC	2253	88.7	2500	709.4
243rd ASHC	5547	3792.8	2550	979.9
TOTALS	27141	4620.6	21466	7599.2

(2) Medical evacuations 54

(3) Combat Assaults

a Platoon size 22

b Company size 14

3. Statistics recorded from the After Action Report Klamath Falls



SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

c Battalion size 5

(4) Ammunition expended

a 7.62mm 414567

b 2.75mm 2758

c 40mm 10368

(5) Night time hours

a 240th AHC 115.1

b 192nd AHC 10.8

c 180th ASHC 0.0

d 117th AHC 94.9

e 17th AHC 46.9

f 92nd AHC 31.3

g 243rd ASHC 12.2

TOTALS 311.2

(6) Ground Force results

a Enemy losses

1 VC killed 143

2 NVA killed 13

3 VC killed by air 2 (confirmed)  
44 (estimated)

4 Small arms captured 74

5 Crew served weapons captured 3

6 Rice destroyed/captured 101.125 tons

7 Salt captured 3 tons

b Friendly losses

1 KIA 28

CONFIDENTIAL

9

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AVN-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

<u>2</u> WHA (Medevac)	106
<u>3</u> WHA (Minor)	38
<u>4</u> MIA	0

## (7) Anti-aircraft fire

<u>a</u> Number of aircraft receiving fire	35
<u>b</u> Number of aircraft hit	20
<u>c</u> Number of aircraft lost	0
<u>d</u> KHA	0
<u>e</u> WHL (Minor)	5
<u>f</u> MIA	0

## (8) Aircraft/Personnel losses non-hostile

<u>a</u> Number of aircraft lost	5
<u>b</u> Number of personnel killed	4

## c. Operations of the 243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company

(1) The 243rd ASHC became operational on 19 November 1967.

(2) Initially, six of the unit's CH-47 Aircraft were allocated in support of the 52nd CAB during the Dak To campaign. In addition, the unit was in direct support of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division during operation Klamath Falls. Concurrently with these operations, general support missions in the II CTZ were assigned.

(3) Since becoming operational, the following support has been provided:

<u>a</u> Hours flown	2971
<u>b</u> Troops lifted	17503
<u>c</u> Cargo lifted (tons)	7256
<u>d</u> Aircraft recovered	10

## d. Operations of the 196th Assault Support Helicopter Company

(1) The unit's mission remained unchanged throughout the

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AVCD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

period. The daily requirement included furnishing three aircraft to the Capitol Republic of Korea Infantry Division (CRID) and six to general support missions. During Operation Mac Arthur, in the central highlands, (November-December) the 196th was heavily committed in support of the 4th Infantry Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade (SEP).

(2) The following statistics reflect CH -47 utilization for the reporting period.

<u>a</u> Hours flown	2925
<u>b</u> Troops lifted	61717
<u>c</u> Cargo lifted (tons)	10190
<u>d</u> Aircraft-recovered	2

## e. Operations of the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company

Major operation supported during the period was Operation Klamath Falls. Elements arrived in Phan Thiet 131830 December 1967 to reinforce the 117th AHC. Missions were initially flown the following day, just two days after the company became operational in-country. Due to the relative inexperience of assigned aviators, the 117th interchanged crews with the 92nd AHC to further enhance the effectiveness of the company. The base of operation was shifted to Bao Loc, RVN on 15 December 1967. Aircraft of the 92nd AHC were released and returned to Dong Ba Thin 162200 December 1967. At 291600 December 1967, the 92nd AHC received a warning order for commitment as a unit in support of operation Klamath Falls to replace the 117th AHC. This commitment continued until the operation terminated on 8 January 1968. In addition, other missions were flown in support of IFFORCEV HQ; E Company, 20th Infantry and the MACV Reconno School at Nha Trang. During the month and a half of operations, the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company accomplished the following:

(1) Hours flown	4346
(2) Troops lifted	11332
(3) Cargo lifted (tons)	450

## f. Operations of the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company

The 192nd AHC was originally assigned to the 260th CAP and located at Phu Hiep, RVN. Six days prior to becoming operational, on 23 November 1967, five gunships were sent to Kontum for reinforcements in the battle of Dak To. On 29 November, the unit was declared operational and given missions in support of the White Horse Republic of Korea Infantry Division (WHRID), Capitol Republic of Korea Infantry Division (CRID), 173rd Airborne Brigade (SEP) and general support with the III CTZ. On 1 December, the second platoon was deployed to An Son and placed in direct support of

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

CRID for a two week period. On 14 Jan 1968 the 192nd AHC was reassigned to the 10th CAB. The company was moved to Phan Thiet and placed in direct support of the 3/506th Infantry, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division on 19 January 1968.

(1) Hours flown	2150
(2) Troops lifted	23,132
(3) Cargo lifted (tons)	760

## g. Operations of the 61st Assault Helicopter Company

(1) The 61st AHC became operational in-country on 20 December 1967 with the mission of general support II Corps Tactical Zone. Combat and direct support missions have been flown since that time in support of Capitol ROK Division, 173rd Airborne Brigade and in general support of IFFORCEV.

(2) During the 51 days of operations the following support has been provided:

a Hours flown	4121
b Troops lifted	13631
c Cargo (tons)	544

## h. Operations of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company

The major activities conducted during the reporting period were characterized by the continued support of the 5th Special Forces Group, Detachment B-52 (Project Delta), coastal missions and support of E Company, 20th Inf. Also included were two extractions of a new facet to 281st Operations has been a recent commitment of aircraft for local employment of the APD People Sniffer. 281st aircraft and personnel were called upon to perform a variety of VIP, resupply, combat, assault and direct combat support missions.

### (1) Operation Prairie Fire (Kontum area, 1 - 9 Nov 67)

Although the four UH-1D aircraft assigned to this operation were primarily used for resupply and liaison missions, several combat assaults were flown into mountain LZ's north of Plei Djereng.

### (2) Operation Folling (Phu Hiep area, 5 - 29 Nov 67)

Seven UH-1D aircraft supported 3/503, 173rd Airborne Brigade (SEP). The aircraft participated in resupply and liaison missions as well as conducting numerous combat assaults. A light fire team, along with the ground unit's organic artillery provided fire support on all combat assaults.

### (3) Operation Rose (Phan Rang area 11 - 20 Nov 67)

Six UH-1D and 2 UH-1C supported 3/506th Infantry Battalion, 1st Brigade 101st Airborne Division. Two companies were lifted during the initial

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AVOD-AD

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

assault into landing zones approximately fifteen miles southwest of Phan Rang. Naval gunfire, TAC Air, Artillery and gunships were used to prepare the LZ's. On 18 and 19 November a company of ARVN and a company of US troops were assaulted into an area south of Phan Rang.

## (4) Operation Sultan I (Polei Klang area 3 - 23 Dec)

During Operation Sultan I (Project Delta), a total of three Ranger companies, one CIDG company and one Mobile Strike Force company were airlifted. During the course of the activities, the 281st lost three aircraft to enemy fire.

## (5) Operation Sultan II (Plei Djereng area 3 - 24 Jan)

During this operation, three ranger companies were airlifted into LZ's in the operational area. In addition to the conduct of the operation for B-52, the 281st was called upon to infiltrate two 4th Division LRRP teams. Shortly after the insertion, they were subjected to intense enemy fire. An Air Force Spooky (AC-47) provided Mini-gun fire support and flare illumination along with the 281st gunships. An emergency night extraction was successfully accomplished without incident. During this operation, eleven Roadrunner teams and thirteen reconnaissance teams were infiltrated.

## (6) Summary of Activities for the Quarter

a Hours flown	5993
b Troops lifted	25833
c Cargo lifted (tons)	476

### c. Training

#### (1) 243rd ASHC

Aviators and crews, upon arriving in the Republic of Vietnam, were assigned to other assault support helicopter companies in the theater and were given on-the-job training with these units for approximately two weeks. Classes were given in the company on maintenance, Vietnam area orientation, and standardization by battalion and unit personnel. Infusion of officers and enlisted men provided experienced personnel in the unit for operational missions.

#### (2) 196th ASHC

(a) One enlisted man attended engine school and two enlisted men have attended airframe school in Vung Tau, RVN.

(b) Lesson plans were formulated and submitted to higher headquarters for classes on military courtesy and dress. Classes are to be conducted for all Officers and NCOs in February 1968.

#### (3) 92nd AHC

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

15  
LVGD-LE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

(a) The most significant training activity within the unit was in-country flight checks for company aviators. A total of 118 hours were flown in the UH-1H and UH-1C by unit instructor pilots. This time included the initial orientation and standardization rides as required by the 10th CAB SOP. Most of these flights were during the period 27 November, through 10 December 1967, before the unit became operational, but the unit aviator training is a continuous process. The standardization of newly assigned pilots, aircraft commander checkrides, and post-accident checkrides are a part of that total time.

(b) Crewchiefs and gunners were given refresher training in air to ground firing, assembly and disassembly, and safety aspects of the helicopter-mounted M-60 machine gun. Approximately four days were devoted to this instruction.

(c) Both aviators and enlisted crewmen were instructed in the use of the Mark-24 Aircraft Flare. Two days of training were devoted to this subject. The 92nd AHC is required to maintain a flare ship on standby nightly in defense of the Dong Ea Thin perimeter. All crews are thoroughly trained in the employment of this flare.

(d) Approximately four hours of instruction were given to unit aviators concerning use of the AN/APX-44 Transponder and Flight Following Procedures in Vietnam.

(e) Unit aviators and non-commissioned officers received a one and one-half hour class on the KY-28 voice security device.

(f) One hour per month was devoted to safety classes for all unit aviators.

## (4) 192nd AHC

As was the case with other new in-country units, aviators and crews were attached for training to other AHCs during their first two weeks for orientation. Other training, such as First Aid, Weapons Familiarization, Care and Cleaning of individual and aircraft mounted weapons and related subjects were continuously conducted within the unit. Much of the training was given during the twenty days aboard ship as the unit was enroute to Vietnam. Standardization checkrides were administered by battalion and unit instructor pilots when the aircraft were brought to Phu Hiep and prior to the company becoming operational.

## (5) 61st AHC

In-country training was controlled by the 129th AHC, 268th CAB, located at An Son, which was the sponsoring unit for the 61st.

4. In order to establish a uniform usage factor, the 10th CAB surveyed all units and developed an SOP for MK-24 Flare employment. This is attached as Inclosure 1.

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

14

AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

In addition, crews were sent TDY to other assault helicopter companies for approximately two weeks for in-country checkouts and operational flying. Individual and crew training was conducted concurrently with the unit's preparation for operational status.

## (6) 281st AHC

(a) Training has been continuing in the Recondo techniques, with frequent practical exercises, in conjunction with the MAC V Recondo School. This permits the 281st aviators to maintain their proficiency and at the same time, allows newly assigned personnel the opportunity to become familiar with the techniques used both by Project Delta and Recondo in LRRP operations.

(b) In addition to the Recondo training, there has been active and continuous training in such subjects as survival, escape and evasion and emergency exiting from aircraft. Recently, classes have also been given on maintenance and preferred methods of pre-flight. 281st personnel gave classes to newly arrived members of E Company 20th Inf (LRRP) on the use of aircraft hoists, rappelling, the use of the McGuire rig and followed it with practical exercises.

(7) Formal Battalion level training was not conducted. Maximum effort was required to bring all units to combat operational status in the shortest possible time. The relative short in-country time of these units prior to combat operational status may be attributed to the quality of the training effort.

## 4. (U) LOGISTICS

a. Major logistics efforts during this reporting period have been directed toward:

- (1) Eliminating excess equipment on hand in units.
- (2) Reduction of CONEX inventory.
- (3) Improvement of motor maintenance and supply operations.
- (4) Coordinating and planning unit moves.
- (5) Redistribution of body armor assets.
- (6) Dong Ba Thin perimeter improvement.
- (7) Improvement of miniport equipment.

b. POL: The Battalion miniport equipment consists of a 240 GPM pump, a 350 GPM separator, a ten thousand gallon bladder, and sufficient hoses, nozzles and fittings required to establish an eight point miniport. The entire system plus a  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton truck with trailer can be moved in one CH-47 sortie utilizing internal and external sling loading. The system

12 CONFIDENTIAL

15

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVGP-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

can be installed by two men. This miniport was displaced five times during Operation Klamath Falls to provide forward area refueling. When not required for forward areas, it was used to establish separate CH-47 refueling areas.

c. Supply: The practice of maintaining an S-4 representative in the forward area was highly successful. The S-4 Forward served as the coordinating agent between aviation units and the FSE or FSA. The battalion S-4 section does not have the equipment or personnel to establish a unit distribution system and it is therefore necessary for units to deal directly with FSE or FSA. An S-4 representative in the forward area relieves the companies of added coordination requirements.

d. Assistance Visits: All units were visited by the Battalion Motor Officer and a supply representative. A monthly visit is conducted when possible. These assistance visits have standardized and improved motor operations and supply procedures.

e. EDP: EDP's have taken from ten to fifteen days from requisition to delivery. Additionally, parts fill of replacement items from ASL-PLL are being delayed. Infusion of aircraft caused an imbalance of ASL-PLL stocks which were based on the original flying hour program of assigned aircraft. This has been a major contributing factor in the current parts shortage.

f. A shortage exists in chest protectors, emergency (URC-10) radios, and proper fitting ballistic flying helmets. These items are considered essential for combat operations and although on requisition, have not been received in sufficient quantities.

g. The lack of an L-13 engine hot-end inspection kit has seriously hindered the maintenance effort. The does not appear to be a local problem. Only two or three complete kits have been located in the country, none of which were accessible to 10th Battalion units. Only through personal liaison with a possessing unit has it been possible to process the L-13 engines through the hot-end inspection.

h. All aircraft in the assigned units have again exceeded the allotted flying hour program while continuing to maintain a satisfactory percentage of availability. The following chart is the quarterly summary of maintenance data on the flying hour program, November through January.

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

UNIT	61st AHC	92nd AHC	192nd AHC	281st AHC	196th ASHC	243rd ASHC
TYPE A/C	UH-1	UH-1	UH-1	UH-1	CH-47	CH-47
AV NO A/C ASCN	28.5	27.5	28.0	29.3	15.6	16.0
% FLYABLE	81.0	71.0	79.1	75.9	59.6	65.7
% MORS	6.5	10.9	12.4	11.2	26.2	10.5
% NORM	12.5	18.1	8.5	12.9	14.2	23.8
TTL HRS QUARTER	4121	4346	2150	5993	2925	2971
AV FLY HR PROG	1720	1650	1680	1780	783	800
% FLY HR PROG	120.7	132.2	128.0	116.1	124.2	123.8
AV HRS PER A/C PER NO	72.5	77.1	76.8	69.7	62.1	60.5

5. (U) CIVIL AFFAIRS

a. The Civil Actions Program has continued to function in an outstanding manner. During the two holiday periods observed this quarter, the children of the Tan Binh and Sai Mai orphanages attended several parties hosted by Headquarters, 10th C&E and the 92nd AHC.

b. The 243rd ASHC has undertaken the task of building a huge school complex for a mission in the village of Xuan Ninh, 10 miles south of Dong Ba Thin.

c. The 196th ASHC continues to support four students attending the Qui Nhon Normal College. Aid is in the form of scholarship grants covering the school year.

d. The 281st AHC continues to support the Tan Vinh orphanage in Nha Trang. On 30 January 1968, six buildings were given to a Vietnamese prison unit. The prison provided the labor to tear the buildings down. They were then rebuilt by the Vietnamese themselves.

CONFIDENTIAL

17

## CONFIDENTIAL

AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

### 6. (U) PERSONNEL

a. During the past quarter, the 10th CAB gained three helicopter companies from CONUS. In order to expedite personnel in-processing, the Battalion Personnel Section traveled to each new unit's assigned location. This technique proved to be very successful in that company personnel were tied up a minimum amount of time. This contributed considerably to the units becoming operational in the shortest period of time.

b. Infusion continues to be a problem. The 196th ASHC had sixty-five personnel DEROS during the months of December and January. Sixty more will DEROS in February. The total number of personnel scheduled to DEROS over this three month period is 54% of the unit's authorized strength. This existing situation resulted from an improper infusion program upon arrival of this unit in the Republic of Vietnam.

### 7. (U) OTHER

#### a. Information Officer

(1) The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion Public Information Program continues to be active providing coverage of the Dong Ba Thin complex and the forward areas.

(2) A summary of the Battalion News Releases is as follows:

(a) Feature Articles	25
(b) Pictorial Releases	35
(c) Hometown News Releases	907
(d) Formal Press Interviews	1

(3) The Battalion continues to utilize the PIO capabilities of higher headquarters to cover important events.

(4) Armed Forces Television and Radio Network is being explored as a possible media for dissemination of information. Liaison has been established with the OIC of the radio station located at Dong Ba Thin.

## CONFIDENTIAL

18

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AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

b. Signal

(1) A highlight of this quarter was the installation of a Communications Center, radio and switchboard, at Lam Army Heliport, An Son, RVN. This included an AN/ARC-102 palletized set for HF/SSB radio communications: a radio teletypewriter set, a VRC-2 for RTT communications, with security equipment, KW-7/TSEC; giving this area a secure means of sending classified messages to Dong Ba Thin. As the needs increased, a new switchboard, SB-86, was obtained but even with an increase in the number of available drops, it was soon deemed inadequate. A request has been submitted through Signal channels to replace the existing switchboard with the AN/MTC which should meet all existing and projected needs.

(2) The Battalion received the radio set AN/MRC-119 which was issued to the assigned companies (AHC). This unit proved to be an outstanding acquisition with, however, one glaring discrepancy. Its teletype capability is restrictive in that no security equipment was provided.

(3) The Battalion Headquarters obtained a radio set AN/TRC-1146, a HF/SSB voice radio which was put into use in the 17th CAG HF/SSB radio net. This set merits mention in that it has performed continuously on a twenty-four hour basis since it was issued in November without problems.

c. Surgeon

(1) The 10th Battalion dispensary is facing a growing personnel problem. Two medical aidmen are projected DEROS losses in February, and the assigned strength at that time will be less than 50% of that authorized by TOE.

(2) No flight surgeon is located with the 192nd AHC at Phan Thiet. The Infantry Battalion Dispensary at that location is capable of administering to injuries and some illnesses. A flight Surgeon from the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters is scheduled to make weekly visits to the area to administer to the aviation medicine needs.

d. Standardization and Safety

(1) The accident rate continues to be a major problem in all aviation units. Fatalities from common aircraft accidents far outnumber those realized in combat. Recently, very strong command emphasis was placed

## CONFIDENTIAL

19

**CONFIDENTIAL**

AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968

on safety and on accident prevention. Safety and standardization must be inseparable and interdependent on each other. Both the Battalion Safety Officer and the Battalion Standardization Officer have combined their efforts to aggressively attack and combat this problem. They are continuously evaluating accident reports for obvious trends. All Safety hazards are being disseminated rapidly to all concerned via the Standardization and Safety Newsletter. Through these combined efforts, a downward trend is beginning to materialize.

(2) Experience, or rather its inadequacy, continues to pose problems, particularly in the assault helicopter companies. Fully qualified standardization instructor pilots are in short supply. A continuous training program is essential to keep even a minimum number available in these units. A newly-graduated aviator who is above average in all respects usually cannot be appointed as an instructor pilot until the eighth or ninth month in RVN. Infusion programs for the new companies have been beneficial in this respect.

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# CONFIDENTIAL

AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

## SECTION II: Commander's Observations and Recommendations

### Part 1 Observations (Lessons Learned)

1. (U) Personnel - None

2. (C) OPERATIONS

#### a. ITEM: Pathfinder Employment

DISCUSSION: During the recently concluded operation KLAMATH FALLS, the use of organic pathfinders in the PZ's and LZ's significantly contributed to the success of airmobile operations. The ground elements were at first reluctant to relinquish control of the pick-up zones but after working with the pathfinders on several lifts, they welcomed this professional and highly qualified team to the operations.

OBSERVATION: In this instance, it was necessary to educate the ground elements in the employment of pathfinders in airmobile operations. A letter<sup>2</sup> was prepared outlining the duties of the pathfinders in an effort to sell these services to the ground units. It is important that the value of using pathfinders be realized by the supported ground forces.

#### b. ITEM: CS Gas Missions

DISCUSSION: The 196th ASHC recently had an incident involving a 55 gallon drum of CS gas exploding in an aircraft while in flight,

OBSERVATION: Although the crew wore their protective masks, all personnel aboard the aircraft were not wearing them during the conduct of this mission. This resulted in major damage to the aircraft caused by the escaping gas affecting those without masks and hampering the ability of the crew to control the ship.

#### c. ITEM: Requirement for Separate Frequencies during Combat Missions.

DISCUSSION: Resupply of Artillery units occurs on a daily basis where generally no communications problems are encountered. However, when considering the move of TAC CP's and Artillery Fire Bases, the Administrative not commonly used is overworked. Consequently, poor communications with the supported units is experienced.

5 Ltr, Pathfinder Support is attached as Inclosure 2

CONFIDENTIAL  
18

21

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVCD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

OBSERVATION: An extremely undesirable situation exists in FZ's and LZ's. Too often, the radio operator in these areas is not familiar with airmobile operations and in addition, is often hampered by having to handle administrative traffic on the same frequency. A separate aviation radio frequency should be designated for use during moves. To facilitate a smoother operation, pathfinders should be utilized to the maximum extent.

d. ITEM: Gunship Tactics

DISCUSSION: During operations against the hostile forces attempting to overrun Phan Thiet, the 192nd AHC gunships, in support of ground troops, were deployed against fixed, hard defensive positions. On repeated passes against these type targets, numerous hits were taken by the aircraft and crewmembers from automatic weapons within these defenses despite additional suppressive fire from friendly ground elements. The gunships utilizing 2.75 inch rockets with ten pound warheads, were unable to neutralize these targets.

OBSERVATION: Gunship tactics should not include attempted reduction of hard targets, regardless of the intensity of suppressive fire, without heavier rocket warheads.

e. ITEM: Night Hunters

DISCUSSION: Night Hunter teams, in this instance, are composed of a slick "Hunter" equipped with two starlight scopes mounted on M-16 rifles, two spotters and a normal crew; a flare ship carrying forty or more flares; and a light fire team as an escort. Experience with this concept shows that lower altitude and airspeed are a definite aid to the spotters. Diminishing returns are observed at approximately two hundred feet absolute altitude and forty knots airspeed. At this point, the aircraft and crew become extremely vulnerable to hostile fire, and the physical scope area coverage is reduced. Properly trained crews, working with minimum lighting can produce effective results operating at altitudes and airspeeds within safe operating limits of the aircraft.

OBSERVATION: Night Hunter aircraft should not be employed below two hundred feet absolute altitude or at less than forty knots airspeed. Increasing both to accommodate rolling or variable terrain will not reduce the effectiveness of target spotting.

f. ITEM: Command Relationship

DISCUSSION: Due to mobility inherent in aviation units, there

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AVGD-1E

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

are numerous RON missions and extended field operations involving flight platoons, sections and single aircraft in which they are required to back-up another aviation unit. Often, the crews find themselves in a situation where contact with their parent unit is impossible and the local aviation unit is unable to provide the necessary support required to sustain operations.

OBSERVATION: If a flight platoon, section, single ship or an entire company is dispatched to back up or support another aviation unit and the mission involves an RON or for an extended period of time, the command relationship between the two aviation units must be specified (Attachment, Operational Control, etc) in the movement order or mission request. Logistical, maintenance and administrative support is determined by this relationship.

## 3. (U) Training and Organization

### a. ITEM: CA Training

DISCUSSION: At the beginning of Operation Klamath Falls, it was evident from the rash of strike and RPM-loss accidents that the 117th AHC was weak in the fundamentals of formation flying and combat assault operations. The unit had been in General Support II CTZ for the previous seven months and had recently received a large number of newly rated aviators. Monthly training in formation flying and combat assaults had been planned but it was impossible to conduct company training because the unit's aircraft were scattered throughout the II Corps area on various missions.

OBSERVATION: The technique of combat assaults is an art which requires constant practice not only from the individual aviator's viewpoint but to develop the unit working as a team. All opportunities to practice this training must be taken in order to maintain the high degree of proficiency required. Platoon or even section sized training in this area is encouraged.

### b. ITEM: Instrument Training

DISCUSSION: Due to the flying environment in Vietnam and the changing weather conditions, a need exists for CH-47 aviators to be fully instrument rated. The 243rd ASHC received several non-instrument rated aviators and time was not available to qualify them prior to deployment. Although a few school quotas were made available, the priorities of transition and POR qualification allowed only three aviators to attend the school at Fort Rucker.

CONFIDENTIAL

23

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AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

OBSERVATION: Greater emphasis should be placed on instrument qualification prior to aviators being assigned to an assault support helicopter company. This must be done in CONUS where ample quotas are available. Too often, completion of a mission is affected because of adverse weather conditions and non-instrument rated aviators in the cockpit.

c. ITEM: CH-47 Aviator Training

DISCUSSION: The majority of loads carried by the CH-47 are external. A definite need exists for aviators and flight crews to receive training in this area. Fort Rucker is conducting unrealistic transition training since the terrain and the heavy artillery equipment necessary to operate with and within Vietnam is not present.

OBSERVATION: All CH-47 transition programs should include a minimum of ten hours in sling operations particularly mountain flying sling operations. Where assigned aviators are not qualified in cargo helicopters this training should be increased. Posts such as Fort Sill, Oklahoma and Fort Hood, Texas are more suitable for this type of training.

4. (C) Intelligence

ITEM: Timely Intelligence

DISCUSSION: The 10th CAB area of interest covers the entire II Corps Tactical Zone. The Battalion aircraft, on general support missions, are continually engaged in airmobile operations and resupply all over the zone. Additionally, companies operate from four separate base areas; An Son, Nha Trang, Dong Ba Thin and Phan Thiet. Timely intelligence is essential to assist these units in the safe performance of their assigned missions as well as for the security of their base installations.

OBSERVATION: Daily INTSUMS and PERINTREPS from IFFORCEV usually take five days to reach the battalion by distribution. They are of little or no tactical value. The aviation company must rely exclusively on local sources and supported units for timely intelligence.

5. (C) Logistics

a. ITEM: Establishment of CH-47/UH-1 Refueling areas.

DISCUSSION: Colocation of refueling areas for CH-47/UH-1 is undesirable. The high winds from the CH-47 rotor wash create hazardous conditions for a UH-1 whether on the ground or at a hover. The CH-47 also occupies two UH-1 refueling points.

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AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

OBSERVATION: During multiple helicopter operations, refueling both type of aircraft from a single miniport significantly impedes the flow of traffic. Separate refueling areas for CH-47's and UH-1's were used on Operation Klamath Falls. When establishing a CH-47 refueling point, consideration should be given to site location in order to facilitate movement from the refueling area to the cargo sling-out area.

## b. ITEM: Unit Movements

DISCUSSION: The 10th CAB was involved in six moves, company size or larger, during Operation Klamath Falls. Movement was by air, convoy and LST. The oversize vans of the maintenance detachments required land movement. When a convoy displacement occurs, the aviation unit is without heavy maintenance capability for the time that the convoy is enroute as well as for a period of time prior to and after the actual move.

OBSERVATION: All moves pointed out the need for units to maintain accurate movement data for all combinations and modes of travel. Although the solution appears to be complete airmobility for maintenance units, this is not a reality at this time. Units should tailor their existing maintenance assets to permit movement by organic aircraft of maximum maintenance facilities.

## c. ITEM: Usage Factors, CL III and V

DISCUSSION: Pre-operational estimates for quantities of Class III and V must be accurate to prevent shortages or overages. Experience factors create the soundest base from which requirements can be established. During periods of field operations, daily usage rates should be accurately recorded. Usage factors can then be determined to facilitate future planning.

OBSERVATION: Based on the experience of the 10th CAB, a planning chart was developed. The figures, although not concrete, have been used frequently to determine requirements for field operations. Average daily consumption rates for UH-1 and CH-47 in POL and an average of the daily ammunition expenditures have enabled the S-4 to correctly project the requirements for platoons and sections placed on TDY with other units in the II Corps area.

## 6. (C) OTHER

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25  
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AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

a. Signal

(1) ITEM: Equipment Shortage

DISCUSSION: During the Operation Klamath Falls period, the Battalion Signal Section was responsible for operations at Dong Ba Thin, An Son and in the field location. Although the missions were fulfilled, the section was severely taxed. A portable HF/SSB radio set, similar to an AN/PRC-47 for use in a jump command post, would have been ideal for use in the field.

OBSERVATION: More light-weight, compact equipment is needed which can easily be moved from place to place to accomodate fluid situations. The AN/VRC-2 proved to be outstanding for field use in that it was vehicular mounted and easily transported by CH-47.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

26

AVGD-AE

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS GSFOR-65)

PART II - RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (U) Personnel - None

2. (C) Operations:

a. Reference: CS Gas Missions

Recommend that all personnel Crew and passengers aboard aircraft performing gas missions be equipped with protective mask and that all on board be required to wear the masks during flight.

b. Reference: Separate Lift Frequencies

Recommend that separate frequencies be established during combat operations for administrative and operational traffic.

c. Reference: Command Relationship

Recommend that all mission requests specify command relationship between aviation units and reinforcing aviation support.

3. (C) Training and Organizations

Reference: CH-47 Aviator Training

Recommend that additional sling load training be included in CH-47 transition with emphasis on mountain operations.

4. (C) Intelligence:

Reference: Timely Intelligence

Recommend that INTSUMS from IFFORCEV be distributed by electronic means to all combat aviation battalions.

5. (U) Logistics: None

6. (U) Other: None

2 Incl

1. SOP, Night Flare Operations
2. Letter, Pathfinder Support

*Marion F. England*  
MARION F. ENGLAND  
LTC, ARTY  
Commanding

24

CONFIDENTIAL

27

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGD-SC (15 Feb 68)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 Jan 68

HEADQUARTERS, 17th Combat Aviation Group, APO 96240, 23 Feb 68

TO: Commanding General, I Field Forces Vietnam, ATTN: AVGA-GC-OT, APO 96350

1. (U) The 10th CAB Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968 is forwarded for information and action as necessary.

2. (U) This headquarters has reviewed this ORLL and concurs with the report as modified herein.

3. (C) Reference Section I, Para 7. b. (1), concerning radio and telephone communications. 17th CAG has made liaison with the 21st Signal Group for installation of the AN/MTC-1 switchboard.

4. (C) Reference Section I, Para 7. c. (2), concerning medical aid to 192d AHC. Nonconcur, adequate medical coverage is available under current arrangements with supported unit.

5. (C) Reference Section II, Part I, Para 5. a., concerning air transportable maintenance equipment. Concur. MTOE 1-77G containing the required air transportable items has been approved by HQ, USARV and forwarded to the Department of the Army.

6. (C) Reference Section II, Part I, Para 6. a., concerning equipment shortage. 17th CAG has received an allocation of five (5) AN/VSC-2's. One or more of these sets will be reallocated to the 10th CAB as the tactical situation requires. Pending MTOE 1-256G provides for one AN/VSC-2 organic to each aviation battalion.

7. (C) Reference Section II, Part II, Para 2. c., item concerning command relationship. Nonconcur. Command relationships are outlined in Annex G, 17th CAG SOP dtd 1 Jan 68. Changes to these relationships are spelled out in missions as required.

8. (C) Reference Section II, Part II, Para 4., item concerning timely intelligence. Concur. 17th CAG has requested of IFFV that 10th CAB be placed on electrically transmitted daily IFFORCEV INTSUM.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ROBERT R. LOVELY  
Captain, AGC  
Assistant Adjutant

25

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

AVFA-GC-OT (15 Feb 68) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending  
31 January 1968 RCS CSFOR-65 UIC WFAJAA 10th Cbt Avn Bn (U)

HEADQUARTERS, I FIELD FORCE VIETNAM, APO 96350 11 MAR 1968

TO: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96375

Concur.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ROBERT C. GABBARD  
1LT, AGC  
ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL

Copy furnished:  
17th CAG

29  
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AVNA-C (15 Feb 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for quarter ending 31 January 1968 (RCS  
CSFOR-65) (UIC: WFAJTO) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384

MAR 29 1968

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DJT, APO 96375  
Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: CPOF-OF, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, DA (ACSFOR DA),  
Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed subject report of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents as indorsed.

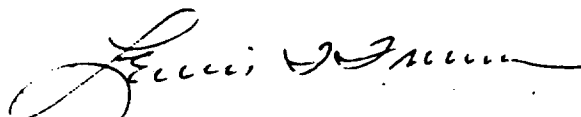
2. (C) The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Reference: Sec I, para 7c(2), page 16; assignment of a medical detachment, when available, is under consideration by this headquarters.

b. Reference: Sec I, para 7d(2), page 16; this headquarters is surveying its subordinate units to determine status of Instructor Pilots and Standardization Instructor Pilots and will make recommendations by separate action based on results of their survey.

c. Reference: Sec II, para 5, page 4; current United States Army Vietnam letter, subject Marking of Refueling and Parking Areas, dated 24 November 1967 specifies the proper spacing and arrangement for refueling and parking areas.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



**LEWIS T. TURNER**  
Capt, AGC  
Assistant Adjutant General

27

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DOD DIR 5200.10

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AVHGC-DST (15 Feb 68) 4th Ind (C)

CPT Arnold/twl/LBN 4485

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968

(RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 12 APR 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,  
APO 96558

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1968 from Headquarters, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion as indorsed.

2. (C) Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning instrument training, page 20, paragraph 3b: Concur. One of the prerequisites for attending the CH-47 aviator transition course is to have a current Army Rotary Wing Instrument Certificate. Past experience indicates that this is the prerequisite most commonly waived by DA. The problem is one of availability of RW instrument qualified aviators to attend this course. If the requirement for instrument qualification is not waived, there will be inadequate input to maintain the present student level.

b. Reference item concerning CH-47 aviator training, page 21, paragraph 3c; and page 24, paragraph 3: Concur. The present program of instruction at Fort Rucker contains 12 hours of flight instruction on sling load operations. Beginning in March 1968, a portion of the fifth week of training will be conducted in mountainous terrain at Fort McClellan, Alabama. This is a direct result of the 2d Quarter, FY 68 USCONARC liaison visit.

c. Reference item concerning separate lift frequencies, page 24, paragraph 2b. The advantages of a separate lift frequency are recognized; however, additional frequencies are not available for allocation. Therefore, using unit commanders must reallocate existing frequency assets in order to satisfy the requirement. The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion has one UHF and three FM frequencies assigned by the 17th Combat Aviation Group.

31

AVHGC-DST (15 Feb 68) 4th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

3. (U) A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*C. S. NAWATSUKASA*  
C. S. NAWATSUKASA  
Captain, AGC  
Assistant Adjutant General

Copies furnished:  
10th Cbt Avn Bn  
1st Avn Bde



22

GPOP-DT (15 Feb 68) (U) 5th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 10th Cbt Avn Bn for Period Ending  
31 January 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 2 MAY 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-  
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

  
K. F. OSBOURN  
MAJ, AGC  
Asst AG

33

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 10TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO 96377

Incl 1  
AVGD-AE

19 December 1967

SUBJECT: Night Flare Operations

TO: Commanding Officer  
17th Combat Aviation Group  
APO 96240

1. PURPOSE: To provide guidance and procedures for commanders and members of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion in the employment of the Mark 24 flare for night combat operations.

2. SCOPE: This SOP is provided as a guide only. The terrain and enemy situation may alter these procedures in order to accomplish the mission.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. Each platoon commander will insure that an enlisted member in the grade of E-5 or above and four (4) other enlisted men of his platoon are thoroughly trained as a "flare-team" in the operation and employment of the MK-24 flare from the UH-1D and UH-1H helicopters.

b. Each aircraft commander or pilot in command will insure that he and "flare-team" are thoroughly knowledgeable of this SOP and the operating procedures of the MK-24 flare prior to accepting or proceeding with a flare drop mission.

4. GENERAL:

a. The two most common flares utilized by Army Aviation in Vietnam are the MK-24, Models IIA and 3. The following is a description of each:

1. Model IIA: Weight - 24 pounds  
Burning Time - 2½ minutes with two million candlepower. (MCP)
2. Model 3: Weight - 27 pounds  
Burning Time - 3 minutes w/2 MCP.

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DOD DIR 5200.10

INCL 1

31

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34

AVGD-1E

19 December 1967

SUBJECT: Night Flare Operations

b. Operational settings and information pertaining to drop procedures and altitudes to be used are included in the storage container of each flare.

#### 5. OPERATIONS:

a. The UH-1D and UH-1H have a capacity for 40 flares which will provide continuous illumination for one hour and forty minutes using the III Model and two hours with the 3 Model.

b. Altitude settings for drop, ignition and burn-out are prescribed in the appropriate instruction sheet issued with each flare. The optimum altitude for dropping flares is 2200 - 2700 feet absolute. 2200 feet will give a ground burn-out and 2700 feet will give a 500 feet burn-out. NOTE: Wind drift must be taken into consideration for maximum illumination. Close attention to forecasted wind conditions and trial and error corrections are the best methods for determining wind drift. The wind drift formula,  $\text{Drift, (in meters)} = \text{Altitude, (in hundreds of feet)} \times \text{wind velocity, (in knots),} \times \text{the given factor (4.1)}$ , may be used for dropping the initial flare.

c. The best airspeed for dropping the MK-24 flare is 60 knots indicated.

d. The flare-team leader in the grade of E-5 or above and a minimum of one other EM, trained in flare ship operations, will arm and prepare flares for dropping. All flares will be attached to an "O" ring in the floor of the aircraft by the use of an 8 to 15 foot static line. The static line is normally locally procured using nylon parachute suspension line of 500 pounds tensile strength and a suitable snap-link. The flare-team leader will wear a flight helmet or headset so as to facilitate communications with the aircraft commander. He will insure that all settings are in the desired position and the safety pin is not removed until just prior to drop. Upon landing, he will insure that all safety pins are securely in place and that all dials are returned to SAFE position. He will report this to the aircraft commander.

#### 6. SAFETY:

a. It must be remembered that flares burn powdered magnesium and other chemicals. They will melt steel and cannot be extinguished. The flare case falls free. Extreme care must be taken to prevent inadvertent igniting in the aircraft and/or dropping over friendly troops.

b. The 50 foot steel drop-away static line, issued for use in dropping the MK-24 flare, is not suitable for use in the UH-1D and UH-1H helicopters. Should the cable fail to drop away, approximately two feet

32

CONFIDENTIAL

35

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AVOD-LE

19 December 1967

SUBJECT: Night Flare Operations

of cable would extend past the tail rotor of the aircraft presenting possible entanglement and a safety hazard.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

s/EARL H. TALLEY  
EARL H. TALLEY  
Maj, Inf  
Adjutant

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35

36

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 10TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO 96377

Incl 2  
AVCD-1E

3 January 1967

SUBJECT: Pathfinder Support

TO: Commanding General  
1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division  
APO US Forces 96347

1. The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion has participated in 32 separate combat operations since it became operational in September 1965. During the more than two years of sustained field operations, the employment of organic pathfinders in PZ's and LZ's has been an integral part of its organization for combat. On 28 December 1966, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion conducted what is considered to be the largest non-illuminated night combat assault ever made by a single aviation battalion. Through the effective use of pathfinders in both the LZ's and PZ's, the entire 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division was assaulted into one and two ship size LZ's high in the mountains to the north and east of Kontum. The pathfinders, effectively using voice communications and flashlights in the LZ's, guided the ships safely to the ground. The entire assault was conducted from midnight until five in the morning and was made without incident. It was primarily because of the effectiveness of the pathfinders that such a mission was possible.

2. The pathfinders are infantrymen so they are fully cognizant of the requirements and capabilities of the ground forces. In addition, they are highly trained in air traffic control as well as the capabilities and limitations of the supporting aviation elements. There is also a material confidence between the aviators and the pathfinders and this mutual support tends to substantially increase the effectiveness of both.

3. On a typical employment, for example, in the pick-up zone, the pathfinder is brought out to the area in the command and control aircraft prior to the start of the operation. With his experience, he quickly evaluates the area, considering the size and dimensions, the velocity and direction of the wind and the density altitude. He establishes a control point from which he will be able to observe the flight path in and out of the area; he checks the surface of the landing area for the best touchdown point available and then establishes ACL's based on this evaluation. To all this, he adds the intangible factor; the capability of the aircraft and the aviator. The latter he has gained through personal association

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Incl 2

37

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGD-AD  
SUBJECT:

3 January 1968

with the aviation unit involved. Through this constant evaluation of all these factors, the pathfinder effectively guides the aircraft into and out of the pick-up zone with the confidence inherent within this working experience. In addition, he is constantly aware of the exact number of troops lifted and remaining and keeps the mission commander aware of the existing situation.

4. When moving a TAC CP or an artillery fire base, the pathfinder plays an even more prominent role, both in the pick-up as well as in the drop zone. In addition to controlling the aircraft, he also coordinates between the artillery and infantry on the ground as to the efficient employment of each CH-47 sortie. Again, his training and knowledge in both aviation as well as in ground tactics enable him to satisfy the requirements of both.

5. In view of the above mentioned consideration, with an increased emphasis on aviation safety, it is highly recommended that pathfinder support be included in all future planning for combat aviation operations.

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UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

38

## DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R &amp; D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	
OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		Confidential	
		2b. GROUP	
		4	
3. REPORT TITLE			
Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Hqs, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion (U)			
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)			
Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Nov 67-31 Jan 1968			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)			
CO, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion			
6. REPORT DATE		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7b. NO. OF REFS
15 February 1968		36	
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.		9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
b. PROJECT NO.		681155	
c. N/A		9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
d.			
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY	
N/A		OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT			

36